

METAMORA

DRAWER 12A

ILLINOIS IN GENERAL

Illinois

Illinois Towns

Metamora

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

The Youth's Companion

February 7, 1924.

THE LAST OF THE LINCOLN
COURTHOUSES

THE old courthouse at Metamora, Woodford County, Illinois, the only courthouse still standing in which Abraham Lincoln practiced law, was, writes a contributor, transferred not long ago to the State of Illinois to be used as a Lincoln memorial and museum. The original and temporary county seat of Woodford was at Versailles, and the first courthouse was a square, one-roomed, unpainted, unplastered building with a fireplace at either end, a raised platform for the judge's chair and seats made of split logs with the flat side up and set on pins.

At the end of two years it was determined to leave the permanent site of the county seat to



five commissioners, all of whom were men living outside the county. The commissioners were to meet at Versailles on the first Monday in June, 1843. Hanover, now called Metamora, more centrally situated and on the state road, was a contestant for the coveted honor, and the contest was waged with great spirit. As a last measure the Versailles faction intercepted the commissioner from Fulton County, who was believed to be in favor of Hanover, as he was on his way to the meeting and informed him that the meeting had been held and, lacking a quorum, had adjourned. Thereupon he turned his face homeward. Learning of the trick, the Hanover faction sent a rider on a fleet horse to overtake him. The commissioner again turned towards Versailles, and, although his horse gave out and he was compelled to stop overnight by the way, he reached Versailles in time for the meeting, where after due deliberation the vote resulted in favor of Hanover. The courthouse was loaded on runners and by a circuitous route to avoid heavy timber arrived at its destination after a two days' trip.

The courthouse that has become the Lincoln memorial and museum was built by David Irving in 1845 on a contract for \$4400. At that time there were no railways west of the Allegheny Mountains. With the exception of the windows, hardware and so forth the material used in its construction was wholly native product. The bricks and the lime were burned in near-by kilns. The timbers were hewn from logs cut in the near-by forest. The greater part of the lumber was sawed from black-walnut logs; the finishing lumber came from white walnut or butternut logs, and the shingles were of black walnut. These timbers must not be confused with the yellow, or shellbark, hickory or the white, or butternut, hickory, which throughout New York and New England are commonly called sweet walnut and bitter walnut respectively. The state of preservation in which the building is testifies to the enduring qualities of the materials. The style of architecture is typical of that of the courthouses of the period.

THE LINCOLN COUNTRY.

BY G. A. OWEN.

MEN who had known Lincoln, men who had heard him speak, men whose fathers had known him, told stories of his greatness at a meeting held in Woodford County, Ill., July 11, 1923, when a shaft of marble on a boundary line between McLean and Woodford counties was dedicated to remind the passer-by that once Abraham Lincoln, travelling the old eighth judicial district, came that way.

Not Lincoln the world figure, not Lincoln the emancipator, received tribute that day, but the man who as a lawyer riding out of Springfield stopped at log cabins of pioneers for the night and made the people love him for his kindness and his humor; who held them spellbound when he pleaded a case, and won them by his magnetic personality long before he was known nationally. Woodford County was organized in 1845. There Lincoln attended court regularly, going from Bloomington, the county-seat of McLean County, organized in 1830. At the dedication of the marker Professor Radford, now eighty-five years old, recalled how his father came home from Metamora, then the county-seat of Woodford County, and told how Lincoln, who was there attending court, collected all the lawyers in the Metamora Hotel night after night, and entertained them until morning with one story after another.

As the hotel was then unfinished, the proprietors, to take care of the guests coming to court, had placed planks upon the joists and improvised an up-stairs room, which was one large dormitory and reached only by a ladder. It was in this room that the men listened to Lincoln. In the morning the first to descend the ladder was Lincoln, who said he liked to see the women cooking and to play with the children.

However, not all the stories were humorous, for it is remembered and told in Metamora that during the session of court held in 1852 through the month of April Lincoln recounted how he and some comrades had built a flatboat, loaded it with pork, and floated down the river to New Orleans, arriving there about holiday-time. They went to see all the sights of the city, and the slave-market was one. To a little group of lawyers on a beautiful spring day in Metamora he remarked as he finished the account of his trip,

"I saw young women, as white as any that walk these streets to-day, sold on the auction-block simply because they had some Negro blood in their veins, and I became so disgusted with the institution that I said if I ever had a chance of hitting slavery I would hit hard."

than in any other section. There lived Jesse Fell, who was the first to approach him in regard to the presidency, while Woodford County, rich in memories and stories, has been until recently rarely visited by tourists. The little town of Metamora, once the county-seat, holds unusual treasures in the shape of historical reminiscences, private letters, and keepsakes that are now being offered to the

It was in the Metamora court-house that Lincoln tried the case where two men had traded horses, and in the trade one had given the other a blind horse. The other sued him for fraud. Lincoln appeared for the prosecution. A Mr. Logan defended the man who had traded off the blind horse. At that time shirts with long pointed collars and opening in the back had just become fashionable. That morning for the first time Mr. Logan was wearing one of those shirts. Not being accustomed to the opening in the back, he had put it on wrong side foremost, with the points of the collar sticking back. He made quite a defence, saying that the horse's eyes were so defective any fool should have noticed them. In reply Mr. Lincoln said he knew his friend Logan could not have been fooled in the trade, because he was an adept at the game; but he said, "Gentlemen of the jury, you will perceive that Logan doesn't know when he has his shirt on 'right.'" This brought down the house, and Lincoln won the case.

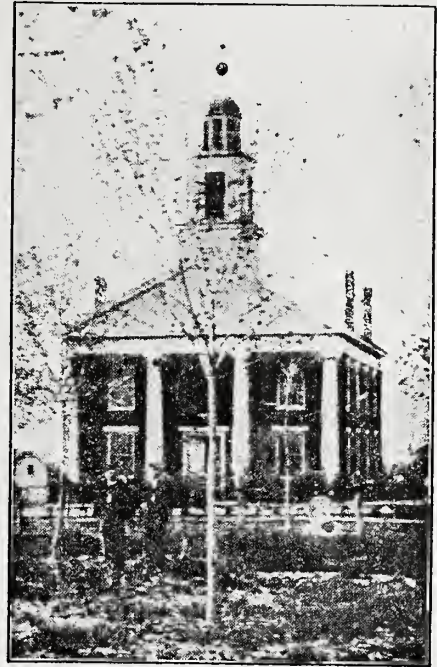
During the memorable campaign of 1858, when there was a contest between Lincoln and Douglas for the senatorship, the two men visited Metamora. Until 1908 no record of the visit of Lincoln had been found. Then interested residents of Woodford County took up the search; and while they learned from an old file of the *Chicago Times* that Douglas travelled into Metamora with a procession of wagons, buggies, horsemen, and carriages that was four miles long, and the air was filled with banners and shouting, there was no mention of Lincoln's arrival. During Douglas's visit the band-stand fell down; but that did not daunt the crowd, neither did heavy showers. Nothing could quell their ardor. They cheered to hear Douglas announce that the next election would see a reversal of the former "black Republican majorities."

When no printed accounts of Lincoln's visit to Metamora in 1858 could be found, there were a number of people who remembered the famous day, and declared that Lincoln had not a single newspaper reporter with him, while Douglas had several paid correspondents in the party.

Woodford and McLean counties both have much historic association with Lincoln, especially in the days of his early legal practice. He loved to visit in Bloomington, and had more friends there

old court-house, which has been taken over by the State of Illinois and made into a Lincoln museum. A small town and off the main roads of travel, Metamora has been but little known. With the coming of hard roads and the opening of the museum another shrine will be added to the number that Illinois is creating in honor of the great American.

Bloomington, Ill.

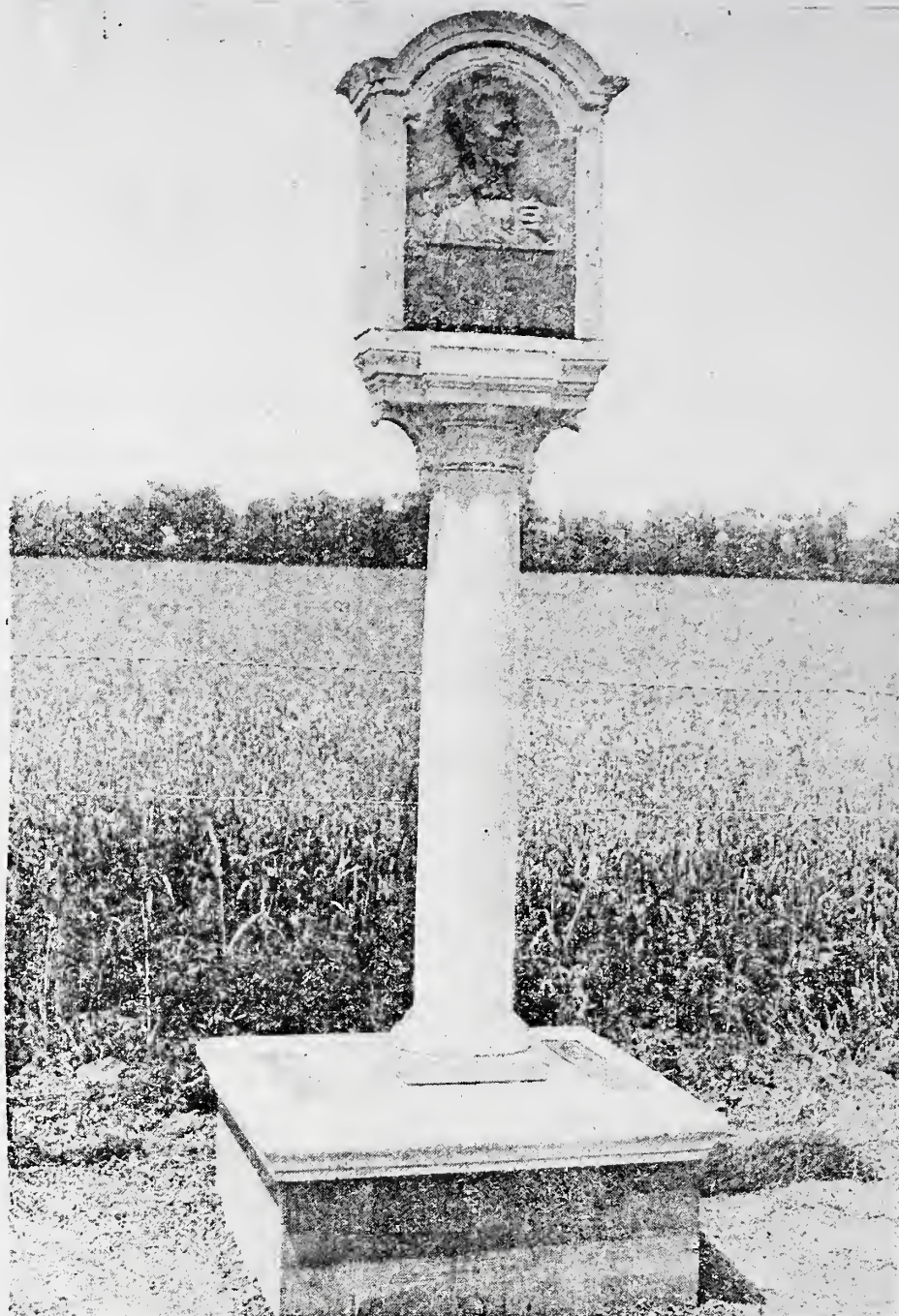


The Court-House as in Lincoln's Day.

Reproduction of an old print belonging to a man who believes that he has the only copy extant.

A New Lincoln Museum

THE old courthouse at Metamora, Ill., is to be decorated with white trimmings and restored to the condition it was in when Abraham Lincoln rode the circuit. The building will be used as a museum for Lincoln relics.



The Historic Metamora House.

Here Lincoln and all the other famous members of the Illinois Bar stayed while holding court across the street. It is now torn down. The picture is from a very old photograph.



A Late View of the Court-House.

These wings were added. They are now being torn down, and the building is being restored to its first condition. The State of Illinois has forbidden photography until the building is completed.

7/5/32
The old Metamora court house, state-owned shrine of Abraham Lincoln, was dedicated on June 28 with a former governor of Illinois, Joseph W. Fifer of Bloomington, delivering the dedicatory speech. In the court house, Abraham Lincoln and many other noted men of the times participated in the trial of cases of importance in American history. This edifice becomes an official memorial to Lincoln after almost 100 years of history.

State Capital News

HISTORIC METAMORA COURTHOUSE TO BE SCENE OF PROGRAM

Metamora, Ill., June 22.—The Historical Lincoln Memorial courthouse here will be the scene of an unusual gathering on Tuesday, June 28, when a dedication of a court scene of Lincoln's time will be held under the auspices of the Woodford county Historical society and the state department of public works and buildings. Lincoln held court in the local courthouse from 1847 to 1857.

Former Woodford county residents and present residents of the county who have become prominent in various lines of endeavor will take part in the program. Mrs. C. S. Holman is custodian of the Lincoln Memorial courthouse which was taken over by the state by an act of the legislature in 1921.

The program follows:

10 A. M.—Visitation and Inspection of Memorial Building and Museum.

Noon—Basket Dinner in Park.

Coffee served free by Ladies of Am. Legion Auxillary.

Afternoon—Program in Village Park.

1:30 P. M.—Concert Metamora School Band

2:00 P. M.—Invocation Rev. H. F. Schreiner, Washburn

Song Male Quartet

Address of Welcome Robert Schneider, Mayor of Metamora

Response Prof. L. J. Freese, Pres. of Woodford County Historical Society.

Music Metamora School Band

Address John Voelker, Commander Fred Herring Post No. 89, Metamora.

Addresses by Members of Bar Judge W. H. Foster, of Eureka

..... R. Magoon Barnes, of Lacon

History of Court House Dr. B. J. Radford of Eureka

..... Lincoln's Associates in Woodford County

..... Judge Geo. T. Page of Peoria

Presentation of persons who knew or heard Lincoln.

Address of Dedication of Restored Court Room Ex-Gov. Joseph Fifer of Bloomington

Address of Acceptance John G. Boyle, Supt. of Parks, State of Illinois.

Song—"God Be with You Till We Meet Again" Assembly

Martial Music by John Crosby, Morton, Fifer; M. A. Goodyear, Metamora, Drummer; William Knapp, Washburn, Drummer.

THE METAMORA COURT HOUSE.

The dedication of the Lincoln court scene promises to attract many people to the old Metamora court house next Tuesday. The historic building, erected in 1844, was the scene of many law cases in which Abraham Lincoln appeared as counsel. The State of Illinois has restored the building to its original appearance and the Woodford County Historical society and interested individuals have discovered and returned some of the court room furniture which was used when Lincoln and his illustrious associates appeared there.

Dr. George A. Zeller, whose father was one of the pioneers of Woodford county, gives The Star a list of some of the eminent men who acted as counsel or served on the bench in the old Woodford county court house. This list is headed by Abraham Lincoln, who appeared there many times as he rode the circuit. Others are Adlai E. Stevenson, who became vice president of the United States; Robert G. Ingersoll, colonel of the 11th Illinois Infantry and attorney general of Illinois; Count Louis F. Von Feilitzsch, military aide to Maximilian who was emperor of Mexico; Thomas M. Shaw, state senator and circuit judge; George T. Page, judge of the U. S. Court of Appeals; Sabin D. Puterbaugh, lawyer and author of "Puterbaugh's Pleadings;" James S. Ewing, U. S. minister to Belgium; Lawrence Weldom, judge of the U. S. Court of Claims; David Davis, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, United States senator and administrator of the estate of Abraham Lincoln; Joseph W. Fifer, former governor of Illinois who will participate in the rededication of the court scene next Tuesday; William Gordon Randall, survivor of "The charge of the light brigade"; Samuel S. Page, state's attorney and circuit judge; Simon P. Shope, justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois; Greenberry L. Fort, Civil War colonel, state senator and congressman; R. Magoon Barnes, lawyer and naturalist; and Judge Joseph J. Cassell.

June 28 will go down as a red letter day in the history of Metamora.



Metamora Courthouse

STATE HISTORIC SITE



Illinois Historic
Preservation Agency



THE METAMORA COURT HOUSE

HERE, IN 1857, A WOMAN ESCAPED STANDING TRIAL FOR MURDER



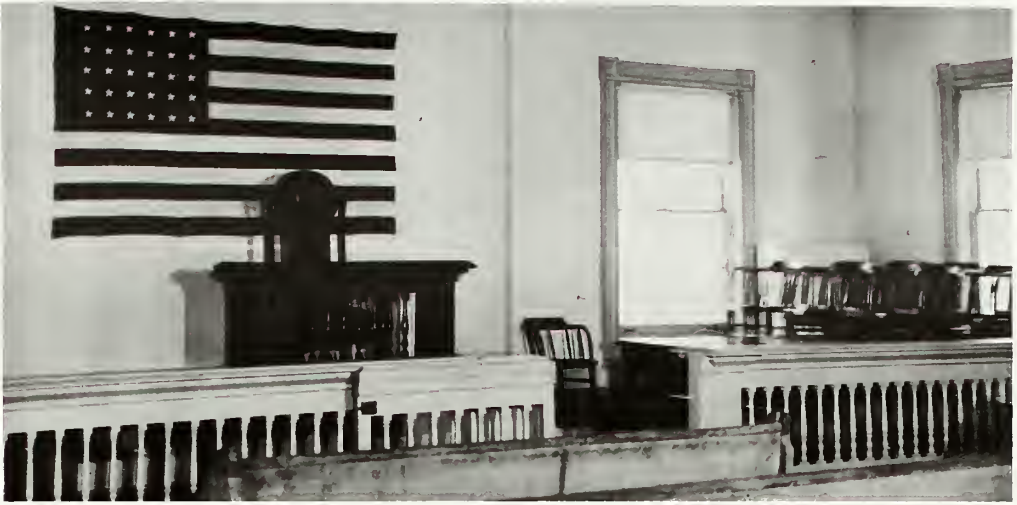
The Eighth Judicial Circuit which Lincoln travelled at the time of the Goings murder case.

Roswell Goings and his wife, Melissa, lived on a small farm a few miles west of Metamora. They were quite elderly, Mr. Goings being seventy-seven and his wife Melissa, seventy.

On April 14, 1857, a coroner's jury found that Roswell Goings had died as the result of being struck on the head with a piece of stove wood—the blow or blows having been delivered by his wife Melissa. A coroner's warrant was issued, and Melissa was arrested. She was given a preliminary hearing and then bound over to the grand jury. Her bail was fixed at \$1,000.

Seven months later, on October 8th, 1857, the Woodford County grand jury heard her case, and returned an indictment against Melissa; the charge was the murder of her husband Roswell.

The community, of course, was shocked and there was much talk among the people. Most of the talk centered on the apparent miscarriage of justice in accusing Melissa with murder. At the coroner's inquest their son, Josephus, had testified that his father often got drunk and, when in this condition, was quarrelsome and abusive to his mother. According to the coroner's records, Roswell had, just prior to being struck, seized Melissa around the neck and was choking her. She was able to fight loose from his grasp, however, and to stop any further attack, she grabbed a piece of stove wood and struck her husband. The people argued, "What was she to do? Let him choke her to death!"—



View of the courtroom which occupies the second floor of the Metamora Court House.

"Why doesn't the law recognize her right to defend herself?" From arguments such as these, it was quite apparent that the people in the community did not believe Melissa Goings to be guilty as charged.

Just two days after the grand jury hearing, on October 10, 1857, she was arraigned on the indictment and ordered by the judge to stand trial forthwith. He also revoked Melissa's bail and committed her to the custody of the sheriff.

Lincoln and Grove were her lawyers. Grove being absent, Lincoln entered a plea of "not guilty," and the court went into recess. Lincoln seated himself on a bench at the rear of the courtroom. He held his stove-pipe hat on his lap, and was peering into its interior and removing various sized papers from within, which he laid on the bench beside him. He knew the judge would soon be calling the case for trial, and he was looking for some notes that he wanted to refer to. He found the paper, placed his hat on the bench beside him, and unfolded the paper and studied it. Suddenly a deep frown appeared on his face, and he laid the paper aside with the others. He thought of how the trial judge had rushed the old lady from the indictment directly into trial. He also considered the unnecessary action of immediately revoking her bail. This meant only one thing to Lincoln, the judge was prejudiced in favor of Melissa's guilt. He looked to the front of the courtroom where he could see the back of an elderly lady's head—this was his client. He sat for a few minutes and stared at her, then he gathered up his papers and returned them to his hat. As he walked up the aisle toward the judge's bench, he said to himself: "How can I ever defend her when the judge has already found her guilty?" He stopped at the railing and raised his hand. The judge said, "Yes, Mr. Lincoln." Lincoln replied, "As my client is held in custody, may I have the court's permission to converse privately with her in a room on the lower floor of the courthouse?" The

request was granted, and Lincoln and his client left the courtroom.

Later, the judge had the bailiff call the case for trial. The judge scanned the courtroom and did not see the defendant, Melissa Goings, among those present. Addressing Lincoln who stood nearby, he inquired, "Mr. Lincoln, where is your client?" Lincoln replied, "I don't know, your honor, I left her on the lower floor. She is no doubt in the custody of the sheriff." An immediate search of the lower floor revealed that Melissa Goings was no longer in the courthouse, or the custody of the sheriff. Also, she was never seen again in the State of Illinois.

* * * * *

Two of the most popular versions of what happened between Lincoln and Melissa just prior to her disappearance are as follows:

This story of what happened was related by Robert T. Casswell, the court bailiff at this time. "Mrs. Goings was brought into court so that Lincoln might talk to her. After a while, I was told, by the state's attorney, to bring her upstairs for the trial; but she could not be found. I asked Lincoln about her and he said he did not know where she was. I replied, 'Found you, Abe, you've had her run off!' 'Oh no, Bob,' replied Lincoln, 'I didn't run her off. She wanted to know where she could get a good drink of water, and I told her there was mighty good water in Tennessee.' "

Another story, and perhaps the correct one, is that Lincoln was convinced that the trial judge would use all his influence to get a conviction. He was also concerned that they might impose a sentence which would break a woman of Melissa's age. With these thoughts in mind, Lincoln probably stressed to Melissa, in that downstairs room, that she would be much safer miles away. He then left the room and Melissa climbed out the window, ran across the field, and disappeared in the woods.

The Metamora Court House is a State Memorial and open to the public.



Metamora Courthouse

STATE HISTORIC SITE



Illinois Historic
Preservation Agency



Metamora Courthouse

Metamora Courthouse

The Metamora Courthouse is one of two surviving court buildings on the old Eighth Judicial Circuit, which was traveled by Abraham Lincoln. Today the old courthouse, with its museum exhibits portraying circuit life in the 1840s and 1850s and its carefully restored courtroom, is managed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

Woodford County Seat

The courthouse was completed in 1845, two years after the Woodford County seat was moved to Metamora from Versailles. Contractor David Irving constructed the building using local materials, including brick that had been fired in kilns located near the site. The courthouse's form was representative of the popular Greek Re-

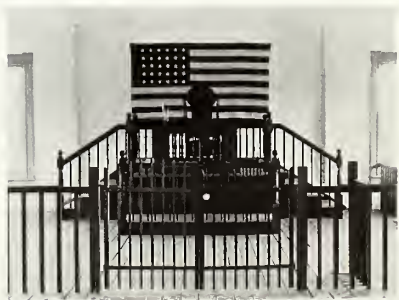
vival architecture used in many mid-nineteenth-century public buildings. Its perfectly balanced design and classical columns recalled the ancient Greek example of orderly progress and democracy.

The new courthouse was a community gathering place. Woodford County residents came to the courthouse to record land transactions, pay taxes, and close the estates of deceased friends and relatives. More importantly, the Metamora Courthouse was the home of the Woodford County Circuit Court. From 1845 to 1894 the second-floor courtroom was the scene of hundreds of criminal trials.

Life on the Circuit

Illinois courts in the mid-nineteenth century operated on a circuit system. The state was divided into several districts, called circuits, each composed of several counties. The number of circuits and counties in each changed over the years. The Eighth Judicial Circuit, to which Woodford County was attached from 1841 to 1857, contained 15 counties in 1845. By 1856 that number had shrunk to eight.

The spring and fall meetings of the court were special times in the life of a county seat. A cavalcade that included the judge,



Hundreds of criminal cases, including ones argued by Abraham Lincoln, took place in the Metamora Courthouse's second-floor courtroom.

district attorney, and lawyers rode into town a day or two before the opening of the term. Lawyers and potential clients met to discuss cases in courthouse offices and hallways, tavern dining rooms, and sometimes on the courthouse lawn. Members of the court and attorneys spent their evenings at inns discussing politics, spinning yarns, sharing jokes, and engaging in good-natured needling of their associates.

The camaraderie provided by this close association may have made up for the privations and discomforts that came with circuit life. Judges and attorneys traveled difficult roads for up to six months of the year in all types of weather, living out of saddlebags. Many of the inns that witnessed the lawyers' nighttime parleys were dirty, drafty, and crowded, with several men often sharing a room. Judge David Davis wrote in the early 1850s that "the tavern at Woodford [Traveller's Rest, in Metamora] is miserable, but it may be that Mr. Cross may take compassion on us & take us to his house."

Metamora's mid-April and late September court sessions usually lasted from two to four days. Some cases were resolved immediately—others were continued to a later term, allowing lawyers and the judge to perform library research needed to prepare arguments and opinions. Many cases were continued over several terms, dragging on for literally years.

Abraham Lincoln at Metamora Courthouse

Springfield attorney Abraham Lincoln was among the prominent attorneys who argued cases at the Metamora Courthouse. Lincoln first practiced there in 1845, shortly after the building's completion, and made regular spring and fall stops until 1857. During those years the future president represented dozens of clients, mostly

in routine civil suits. There were exceptions, however. At the April 1847 court term Lincoln defended George Kerr and J. Randolph Scott against charges of giving aid to a fugitive slave. Though a free state, Illinois statutes provided stiff punishment for those who helped slaves to freedom and would soon (in 1848) adopt a constitution banning black immigration. The court dismissed charges against the men, apparently siding with Lincoln, who had argued

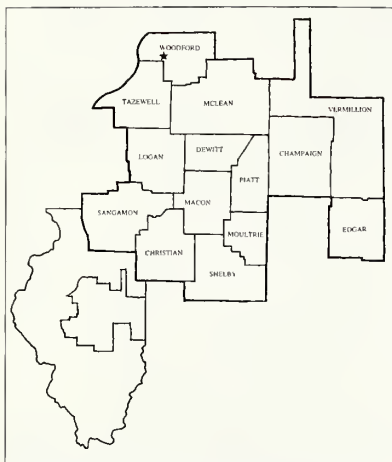


Metamora Courthouse in 1908. The building was considerably altered following the relocation of the county seat to Eureka.

that the state had not proven that the alleged fugitive had, in fact, ever been owned as a slave.

The most famous of Lincoln's Woodford County cases is part of the local folklore. On April 14, 1857, an argument between the elderly Roswell Goings and his wife Melissa turned violent. Defending herself, Melissa picked up a piece of firewood and struck two blows. Her husband sustained a skull fracture and died a few days later. Mrs. Goings was summoned to appear before a coroner's court on April 23 and ordered to post \$1,000 bond.

Formal arraignment came on October 10, 1857, with the trial to begin later in the day. When the case was called in the after-



Illinois Eighth Judicial Circuit, 1848-1853. Woodford County was part of the Eighth Circuit from 1841 to 1857.

noon, Melissa Goings was nowhere to be found. What happened is still unclear. According to the court's bailiff, Robert Cassell, Lincoln took advantage of a private conference with his client to suggest that she flee. Confronted by the bailiff when Goings could not be found, Lincoln is reported to have said, "I did not run her off. She wanted to know where she could get a good drink of water, and I told her there was mighty good water in Tennessee." Another version of the affair has Lincoln telling his client to prepare for the worst and, after suggesting that things would be safer many miles away, leaving her to decide on a course of action. In any case, community feeling seems to have been with Mrs. Goings, whose husband was famed for his violent temper. No serious attempt was made to apprehend her, and on May 24, 1859, the murder charge was ordered stricken from the court docket.

The 1857 Goings trial was probably the last case Lincoln argued at Metamora. Legislation enacted that year removed Woodford County from the Eighth Circuit. Though Lincoln made a few more visits to Metamora, mostly for political purposes, his connections to the courthouse were at an end.

From Courthouse to Historic Site

The Metamora Courthouse continued to serve Woodford County long after the close of Abraham Lincoln's circuit practice. In the 1870s local officials met a need for more space by adding two large wings to the original building. Over the years, several towns made attempts to wrest the county seat from Metamora. Referenda to relocate the county offices, held in 1867, 1869, and 1873, were narrowly defeated. A final bitter battle fought in 1894 resulted in the county seat's relocation to Eureka.

With the removal of the county offices the old courthouse became the property of the town of Metamora. The building's first floor was used for meetings of civic organizations and for storage, while the second story became an "opera house" that was used for entertainment and community gatherings. Rental income paid for the building's upkeep until a new township high school auditorium was opened in 1916.

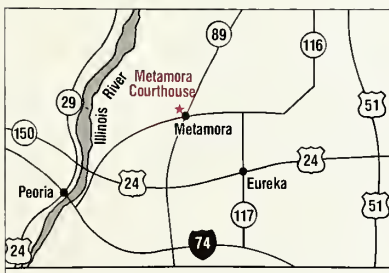
Former governor Joseph Fifer, prompted by local residents fearful for the building's fate, began in 1920 to lobby for the old courthouse's addition to the system of state parks and memorials. Those efforts were successful, and the Metamora Courthouse became a state-owned property. Restoration work soon began, removing the wings that had been added in the 1870s. The process was completed in the 1980s with the final restoration of the circuit courtroom to its original 1846 appearance and installation of exhibits relating

the story of the courthouse and its place in Illinois history.

Information

Metamora Courthouse State Historic Site is open daily from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. It is closed New Year's, Thanksgiving, and Christmas days. Groups of 25 or more must have a reservation. The first floor is handicapped accessible; restrooms are ~~not~~ accessible by wheelchair.

For additional information, write Site Manager, 113 E. Partridge, Metamora, IL 61548, or phone 309-367-4470.



HRS.

TUES.-SAT.

9a.m.-Noon & 1-5 p.m.

Addt'l holiday closings

- Vet. day
- Lincoln B-day
- Wash. B-day
- Martin Luther King day
- Gen. Elect.

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Metamora **COURT HOUSE**



STATE OF ILLINOIS

Dwight H. Green
GOVERNOR

Metamora Court House

Not alone because of its excellent Southern Colonial architecture and honest construction from native materials, but also for its rich historical background is Metamora Court House, in Woodford County, a valuable adjunct to the State System of Parks and Memorials.

The building, dating from 1845, retains the aura of the hearty days of the 'Forties and 'Fifties when lawyers in itinerant groups traveled in "rigs" from one county seat to another, met their clients on the sunny side of the Court House, under a tree, or in the street, and gathered convivially at night in village inns and taverns.

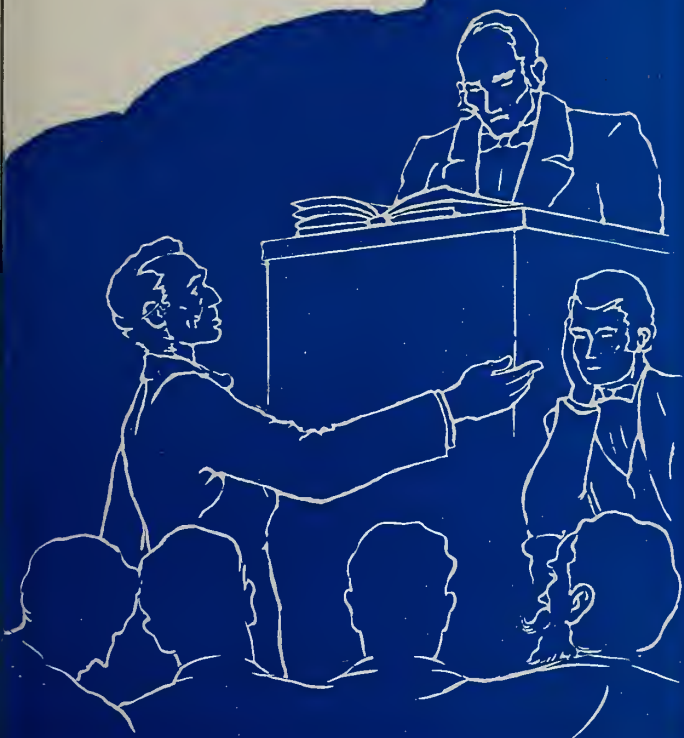
On the old Eighth Circuit of which Woodford County was a part, one of the most popular of these circuit-riding lawyers was Abraham Lincoln, of Springfield. Connections he formed during these years, particularly his friendship with Judge David Davis, were of great value to Lincoln in his political career. It was Judge Davis, later to become a Supreme Court Justice, who was responsible to a large extent for Lincoln's nomination by the Republican national convention in Chicago in 1860.

The Court House, completed two years after the county seat was moved to Metamora from Versailles, was constructed of bricks burned in local kilns and hardware timbers hewn from logs cut near the village. Metamora, called Hanover until it was discovered that there was another village by the same name in Illinois, remained the seat of govern-

ment until 1890 when the county capital was moved to Eureka. The building is substantially the same today as it was then, a 40 by 50 foot structure with a corridor, lined with offices, running through the middle. In 1870, the stairway was moved from the back to the front of the building and in 1884 wings were added, but no other changes have been made.

The Court House was presented to the State as a memorial in 1921. The old Eighth Circuit courtroom is on the second floor. On the first floor is a museum housing a collection of pioneer relics donated by residents of Woodford County.

Before the Civil War, Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, Robert G. Ingersoll, and Adlai Stevenson, later to become Vice-President of the United States, tried cases in this courtroom. Among the famous jurists who presided here, besides Judge Davis, were Norman H. Purple and Samuel Treat.





● Interior of Cabin Room

Write to the Department of Public Works and Buildings, Division of Parks and Memorials, State Capitol, Springfield, for further information concerning Illinois Parks and Memorials.

Forty State parks, 25 of historic interest, are of easy access from every part of the State. Lodges and cabins are an important feature of Starved Rock, Pere Marquette, White Pines Forest and Giant City State Parks. Reservations should be made with lodge managers.

Issued by
 Department of Public Works and Buildings
 Walter A. Rosenfield, Director
DIVISION OF PARKS
 George W. Williams, Superintendent

PRINTED BY AUTHORITY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Metamora

COURT HOUSE



STATE OF ILLINOIS

Frank Foster
GOVERNOR

Metamora Court House

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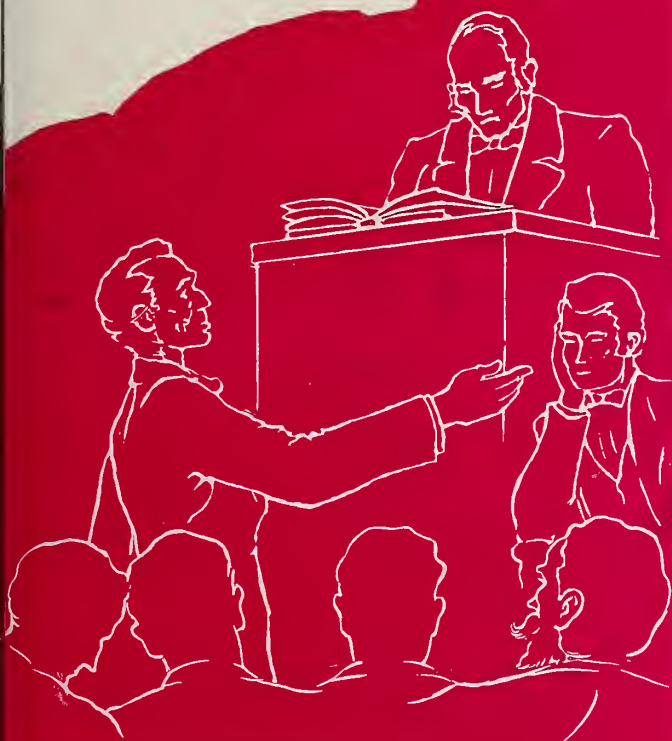
On the old Eighth Circuit, of which Woodford County was a part, one of the most popular of these circuit-riding lawyers was Abraham Lincoln of Springfield. Connections he formed during these years, particularly his friendship with Judge David Davis, were of great value to Lincoln in his political career. It was Judge Davis, later to become a Supreme Court Justice, who was responsible to a large extent for Lincoln's nomination by the Republican national convention in Chicago in 1860.

The Court House, completed two years after the county seat was moved to Metamora from Versailles, was constructed of bricks burned in local kilns and hardwood timbers hewn from logs cut near the village. Metamora, called Hanover until it was discovered that there was another village by the same name in Illinois, remained the seat of govern-

ment until 1896 when the county capital was moved to Eureka. The building is substantially the same today as it was then, a 40 by 50 foot structure with a corridor, lined with offices, running through the middle. In 1870, the stairway was moved from the back to the front of the building and in 1884 wings were added, but no other changes have been made.

The Court House was presented to the State as a memorial in 1921, and the old Eighth Circuit courtroom on the second floor is now a museum housing a collection of pioneer relics donated by residents of Woodford County.

Before the Civil War Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, Robert G. Ingersoll, and Adlai Stevenson, later to become Vice-President of the United States, tried cases in this courtroom. Among the famous jurists who presided here, besides Judge Davis, were Norman H. Purple and Samuel Treat.





● Interior of Court Room

TRAVEL LITERATURE

Write to the Department of Public Works and Buildings, State Capitol, Springfield, for the following other publications dealing with the State Park System and travel in Illinois: Illinois Official Highway Map; a booklet, "Illinois State Parks and Memorials," describing all State recreation and historic areas; and a pamphlet, "Enjoy Illinois Hospitality," listing by tabulation scenic, historic and recreation features of each State Park. The State also has for free distribution, folders dealing individually with each of the State Parks and Memorials.

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